



LRF Communications Briefing – Covid19

10 February 2021

LRFBIZ V49- ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY VERSION

Coronavirus Headlines

Expansion of the Workplace Testing Offer

Key Messages:

- *Medium sized businesses and organisations in both the public and private sector with between 50 and 250 staff can now access weekly asymptomatic testing and should do so wherever possible;*
- *[Register](#) on the portal to join a short introductory webinar to learn how to set up a workplace testing site;*
- *Testing will be delivered by Asymptomatic Testing Sites (ATS) in the workplace;*
- *Businesses and organisations of this size and type which can access asymptomatic testing more effectively through community testing should continue to do so;*
- *Those with less than 50 staff, sole traders and self-employed citizens should continue to access asymptomatic testing through community testing delivered by local authorities across the current community testing sites in [Boston, Lincoln and Sleaford](#)*

Announcement

The Government's announcement expands the current offer in Lincolnshire to include this wider workforce who cannot work from home, as institutional testing covering asymptomatic testing is already available for a range of sectors with over 250 staff in the public and private sector. The [workplace programme](#) will include registration via the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) portal and offer workplace testing using lateral flow tests.

Once registered, the DHSC will invite companies to a 1hr introductory webinar briefing before setting up a testing site. Organisations will also be asked to review a set of documents including terms and conditions, which need to be signed before placing an order, available digitally on an ordering platform. Contact the [DHSC team](#) with any queries following the webinar.

Organisations with less than 50 staff, sole traders and self-employed citizens should continue to access asymptomatic testing through community testing delivered by local authorities across the current community testing sites in [Boston, Lincoln and Sleaford](#) through the [Community Testing Programme](#) to access weekly testing including:

- Small or local public sector organisations, e.g. local government.
- Charities and voluntary groups.
- Small or local private sector businesses providing key public services and unable to access institutional testing, e.g. waste management, public transport, taxi firms, volunteers, power and water companies.
- Education or childcare settings not covered by existing schools testing, e.g. private nurseries, children homes, childminders.

- Medium-sized local businesses (generally businesses between 50 and 250 staff) unable to practically access institutional testing.
- Small or local businesses (generally less than 50 staff), sole traders or self-employed citizens.

Public Message from the LRF

The Covid-19 vaccination programme in Lincolnshire is continuing to focus on protecting the most vulnerable, and we have now almost completed first dose appointment invitations to all over 70 year olds in the county.

If you are 70 years or older, and have NOT yet been called to arrange your first dose vaccination appointment, please contact 119 or visit [Book a coronavirus vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk), to make your appointment. You will be able to book directly at one of our large vaccination centres at Lincolnshire Showground in Lincoln or at the Princess Royal Sports Arena (PRSA) in Boston.

If you would prefer to be vaccinated at a primary care site local to you, please wait as you will be contacted by your local NHS service to arrange an appointment in due course. Please only visit a local vaccination site if you have an appointment. A full list of where these sites are can be found here <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/vaccination-sites/>

Anyone under 70 years does not need to do anything. You will be contacted in due course as we continue to work through the national priority group order.

Volunteers requested for local vaccination car scheme

A network of 17 Voluntary Car Schemes are currently welcoming any additional volunteers who may wish to offer transport services in order to provide support and availability for those who cannot access public transport. Drivers are DBS background checked, trained with safeguarding initiatives, and hold both a verified driving licence and public liability insurance.

In order to remain Covid-compliant, the transport scheme enforces policies such as mask wearing, no direct contact with passengers, passengers seated in the back of the vehicle only, cleaning down prior to each passenger and ensuring drivers are not clinically vulnerable. Call the transport helpline on 03454 564474 to become a valued addition to the team.

World-first COVID-19 alternating dose vaccine study launches in UK

A clinical trial studying the efficacy of using alternating Covid-19 vaccine doses has launched in the UK. The study will examine whether different vaccines can safely be used for two-dose regimes in the future, and has been backed by £7 million of Government funding.

Currently, the programme of administering two doses of the same vaccine over a period of 12 weeks remains unchanged. Further information on the study can be found [here](#).

Business and Economic Updates

Council unveils £12m package of support for local economy

Local businesses could benefit from up to £10,000 of funding through a new grant scheme planned by the county council. In light of the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the council's executive has proposed to use some the authority's reserves to provide a £12m support package for local firms, which includes business grants. The support is primarily aimed at those who have not benefited from the government's previous Covid-19 support schemes, as well as small businesses with 50 employees or fewer.

Cllr Martin Hill OBE, leader of Lincolnshire County Council, said: *"We know local businesses have had a particularly tough time during the pandemic, so we want to make additional support available. Thanks to our careful financial management over the years, we do have reserves we can draw on in times of emergency, and now is the right time to do that."*

Additionally, Cllr Colin Davie, executive member for economic development, said: *"Our small, local businesses are the backbone of the county economy - there are around 43,000 in Lincolnshire, and it's vital we help those that have had no help, to ensure they survive the financial impact of the pandemic."*

The main grant scheme is set to launch at 12pm on Tuesday 23 February, followed by additional schemes in early March. More information to follow.

Manufacturing Sector

Britain's manufacturers are calling on the Government to use the Budget to set out a major long-term industrial and economic strategy, to ensure the UK takes advantage of its world class science base and growth in new technologies.

The call by Make UK comes on the back of its latest Manufacturing Monitor tracking survey which shows that companies are preparing for a long-haul recovery from the current pandemic; more than a third of companies have seen sales (35.9%) and orders (36.6%) decrease since the start of the year.

Moreover, Make UK wants the Government to commit to supporting a new Manufacturing Skills Taskforce, reforming the Apprenticeship Levy, rolling out the Made Smarter initiative across all regions and introducing a net zero support package. Make UK also believes there should be rewards for businesses that reach green targets. Click [here](#) to read more.

Extended application deadline for the Christmas Support Payment of wet-led pubs

The new deadline for applications for the Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs has now been extended to Sunday 28th February 2021. For more information on eligibility, how to apply, and what you could receive, click [here](#).

Free Energy Support Audit for Business

North East Lincolnshire Council's Smart Energy Greater Lincolnshire Team is offering a free energy audit to start the new year. The audit will highlight cost saving opportunities to businesses, whilst enabling them to become more energy efficient.

The audits are carried out by the programme's world leading partners, IfaS, who are experts in energy and material flow management. Businesses will also receive a free report after the audit is completed, highlighting recommendations on how their business can save money, improve efficiency, and reduce carbon emissions. The programme also offers grant funding to help businesses invest in a wide range of energy saving measures, from LED lighting to solar PV and a range of heating solutions.

This opportunity is only available for a limited amount of time, as the Smart Energy Greater Lincolnshire programme is currently set to close at the **end of March 2021**.

To be eligible for support and funding you must be a small to medium business located in the Greater Lincolnshire area. For further eligibility criteria or information visit [here](#) or contact Jose Stewart on 01472 323658 or 07525798172

EU Transition

A list of government helplines organised by theme and key actions for businesses has been published online, available to view [here](#).

A helpline has also been allocated for additional support. For English businesses, the Business Support Helpline can help identify the actions businesses need to take. Similar helplines are available for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. For more information for **businesses in England**, call 0800 998 1098.

Education & Skills

New Commissioner appointed to oversee education catch-up

The Prime Minister and Education Secretary have appointed Sir Kevan Collins as Education Recovery Commissioner. Sir Kevan will lead work to ensure children and young people can recover learning lost due to the pandemic. Education remains the top priority, with government committing £300 million to help with catch-up this year, on top of the £1 billion announced in June 2020. Further information is available [here](#).

Tools, Webinars & Events

Virtual Jobs Fair Returns for Employers and Job Seekers

The Greater Lincolnshire Online Jobs and Careers Fair will return virtually on **Thursday 25th February**, hosted by MP for Boston and Skegness Matt Warman. The event is free to attend and is designed to bring employers and job seekers together for both career and networking opportunities. The fair will take place from 10am until 1pm and can be accessed on the LEP's custom-built website and you can register or find out more at www.greaterlincsjobsfair.co.uk

Matt Warman, MP for Boston and Skegness, said, *"I am greatly looking forward to hosting February's LEP Jobs and Careers Fair, which has already proven itself to be a popular and valuable event for employers and job seekers alike."*

National Apprenticeship Week: 8th-14th February

[National Apprenticeship Week](#) is currently underway, providing information on how to kickstart a career alongside on-the-job education, and promoting companies who provide important apprenticeship training. Parents, teachers, young people and adults can join free events all week; see what's on offer [here](#).

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP is also working hard to promote digital tools and websites via their social media pages, which could help inspire future local apprenticeship careers. For more information, click [here](#).

Online Masterclasses

Business Lincolnshire is advertising a large selection of online masterclasses and webinars this month, available to view on the [website](#). Here are a few examples of what is to come over the next few weeks:

- **'Your Business Journey to Net Zero'** online event - held on Wednesday 10th February from 10am until 4.20pm. Access [here](#).

- ‘Having a Website That Works for your Business’ webinar - held on Thursday 11th February from 1.30pm until 3pm. Access [here](#).
- ‘Mental Health Training: Line Managers & HR’ webinar - held on Monday 15th February from 10am until 12pm. Access [here](#).

Government Webinars and Podcasts

Video content has been created to help keep business moving. A series of short on-demand videos covering the new rules on exports, imports, tariffs, data and hiring are available to view [here](#). In addition, HMRC are also holding the following live webinars this week:

- **What are customs import declarations?** - 11th February - register [here](#).
- **Exporting: Actions you need to take now** - 11th & 12th February - register [here](#).
- **Importing: What you need to know about Staged Controls** - 12th February - register [here](#).

Meanwhile DEFRA are hosting a webinar on **Importing Products of Animal Origin (POAO) from the EU into GB** available on the following dates:

- Monday 15 February from 14:00 to 15:00. To register, click [here](#).
- Monday 22 February from 14:00 to 15:00. To register, click [here](#).
- Monday 1 March from 14:00 to 15:00. This webinar will focus on composites. To register, click [here](#).

Businesses that trade with the EU can click [here](#) to view a list of useful webinars, for which you can sign up to watch live or on demand.

Fixed key messaging

- **HANDS FACE SPACE**
- Approved vaccines are safe and prevent the spread of infectious diseases.
- Visit [Business Lincolnshire](#) for continued support to your business.
- Call the Covid helpline on 01522 782189 and select option 2 for business queries.
- Feed business impacts into [Business Intelligence](#).

The Lincolnshire Resilience Forum has created a Recovery Comms Cell made up of county and district councils, NHS, and LEP/Business Lincolnshire leads to ensure consistency of key messaging. This is not intended as a comprehensive list but to update on new and key messages relevant to economic response and recovery. Follow and tag on Twitter @ [LRF](#) @[GreaterLincsLEP](#) @[businesslincs](#)

CONTACT THE TEAM – IF YOU NEED ANY HELP OR ASSISTANCE PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM						
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